

ASSEMBLYMEMBER CAROL LIU



44TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

N E W S R E L E A S E

F o r I m m e d i a t e R e l e a s e
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Governor Signs Liu “Next of Kin II” Bill

New law inspired by Studio City family will require nursing homes to notify next of kin when patients’ health falters

Sacramento – Assembly Bill 1989, the second Next of Kin bill by Assemblymember Carol Liu (D – La Cañada Flintridge), was signed into law by Governor Gray Davis late yesterday. The bill requires skilled nursing facilities and other facilities for the elderly to contact a patient’s next of kin when the patient’s health deteriorates or changes significantly. The bill was introduced at the request of Janet and Laura Greenwald of Studio City who lost their mother/grandmother when an Illinois hospital admitted and subsequently mistreated the unconscious woman without contacting her family for five days. When the Greenwalds were finally alerted that their loved one had been hospitalized, it was too late to monitor her care or even to say goodbye.

The Greenwalds asked Assemblymember Liu and Senator Jackie Speier to carry a bill, SB 1021, last year requiring hospitals to make every reasonable effort to notify the next of kin of patients who are unconscious or cannot give informed consent, within twenty-four to forty-eight hours of their admission. The successful passage of that bill and a similar measure in Illinois prompted the Greenwalds to seek additional protections for patients and their families, including AB 1989 and a federal bill soon to be introduced in Congress.

AB 1989 expands on SB 1021 by requiring that skilled nursing facilities, intermediate care facilities, congregate living facilities, and residential care facilities for the elderly contact the person named in a resident’s admission agreement within 24 hours of a significant change in

the resident's health or mental status. *"This bill is about compassion and common sense, Liu said. "Patients deserve to be surrounded and supported by loved ones when they fall ill and their family members deserve to know when the health of the patient falters."*

For more information on the Greenwalds, their story of personal loss, and their efforts to enact state and federal legislation, please visit <http://nextkinlegis.tripod.com>.

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